

Bill # 1017: An Act Concerning Election Administration.

Bill # 6578: An Act Concerning Participation in Electoral Process

Dear GAE Committee Co-Chairs Sen. Flexer and Rep. Fox, Vice Chairs Sen. Haskell and Rep. Thomas, and Ranking Members Sen. Sampson and Rep. Mastrofrancesco and Members of the GAE Committee:

I am writing to the committee to voice my support for Bill #1017 and Bill #6578.

During the 2020 election, I enjoyed the convenience of submitting my absentee ballot in a drop box at Town Hall. Now that these drop boxes for absentee ballots have been established, I urge state legislators to make these safe and secure receptacles permanent. Concerns about mail delays affecting ballot returns would be alleviated by the availability of permanent drop boxes. The proposed bill requires the Secretary of State to develop a digital system for election related forms. This provision, which would permit voters to apply for absentee ballots online, is a logical next step in streamlining the absentee voting process. Finally, Bill #1017 would allow visually impaired voters access to absentee ballots.

Bill #6578 would restore voting rights upon completion of a felon's sentence. According to the National Conference of State Legislators, as of January, 2021, 18 states follow this practice already (in 2 states and the D.C., felons never lose their right to vote). Once the sentence of a felon is served, I believe that voting rights should be reinstated. Automatic voter registration at the DMV is a policy that can lead to cleaner voting rolls since the process will update existing registrations with current addresses. Finally, automatic voter registration may increase voter turnout, a result that a representative democracy should be encouraging.

Sincerely,

Linda Pryde Westport, CT prydelect@aol.com